



August 26, 2009

Senate Committee on Economic Development & Regulatory Reform  
Michigan State Capitol  
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Committee Members:

I am writing on behalf of the Detroit Regional Chamber regarding our support of the S-1 version of Senate Bill 437, legislation before your committee that addresses the State's Brownfield cleanup process. The Detroit Regional Chamber is a business organization comprised of over 20,000 members, from sole proprietors to fortune 500 companies, who provide jobs for over ¾ million working men and women.

Created in the mid 1990's, Michigan's current Brownfield program was, initially, a national leader in bringing investment to urban centers for environmental cleanup and redevelopment of contaminated property. While this program has proved a great success for Detroit and the surrounding communities in southeast Michigan, progress has slowed. As with any new program, we later learn that there are improvements that can be made, both to fine tune it and to maintain our status as a national leader.

The S-1 version of SB 437 provides the needed changes to rejuvenate our Brownfield cleanup process by providing a more transparent process for the regulated community and giving the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality the tools it needs to address complex issues in an efficient and scientific manner. While the current program has become difficult for the MDEQ to administer and confusing for the investor to navigate, SB 437 S-1 creates the mechanism for increased open communication with the State as well as an unbiased, expert technical review panel.

The rejuvenation of Michigan's economy depends on the success of its urban centers. These communities, who have played such a vital role in making our State what it is today, have aging, over burdened infrastructure and contaminated legacy sites that pose unique challenges to renewal. By cleaning up undesirable property and returning it to productive use, the Brownfield cleanup program has an unmatched ability to solve multiple challenges for mature, built-out communities. It is for this reason that SB 437 S-1 could play a vital role in economic development and the quality of life in our region.

Sincerely,

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